

U. S. 'Sympathetic' To Ransom Efforts

CPYRGHT

By Donald May
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President Kennedy's top Latin American adviser said yesterday that the United States is sympathetic toward efforts to free Cuban invasion prisoners.

But Edwin M. Martin, Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, denied published reports that attorney James B. Donovan has been acting as an "agent" of the U. S. Government in his negotiations with Premier Fidel Castro.

Martin's statement came as Rep. William C. Cramer (R-Fla.) demanded a congressional investigation of reports that the Government might help pay ransom for the prisoners once a release agreement is reached.

Interviewed on the radio (ABC-Capitol Cloakroom), Martin said Donovan is "acting as an agent for the Cuban Families Committee and solely as their agent."

Cramer, for the third consecutive day expressing concern over reports of possible U. S. assistance on the ransom, made his investigation demand in a House floor speech.

Cramer also sent identical letters to Chairmen Clarence Cannon (D-Mo.) of the House Appropriations Committee, and Thomas E. Morgan (D-Pa.) of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

The Florida Representative said he was particularly disturbed about reports that part of the ransom might be paid "in dollars from CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) funds."

Several other members of Congress have voiced strong opposition to any participation by the Government in the prisoners' deal.

Sen. John J. Williams (R-Del.) urged President Kenne-

dy on Wednesday to deny reports that Federal funds would be involved.

Rep. A. S. Herlong (D-Fla.), wired the President that a taxpayers' ransom would be "repugnant to our traditions."

Rep. John J. Rhodes (R-Ariz.), in a telegram to the White House, quoted Charles C. Pinckney, U. S. Minister to France who said in 1797: "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute."